Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

small *khanjar* is a curved dagger, and it was with this very one Nuri had killed in single combat a minor chieftain of the Muntefiq.

One afternoon young Fuaz and a group of his little friends were practising with slings, the ancient weapon with which David slew Goliath. They shot flat pebbles with astounding accuracy at the small wooden pegs, which held the tent ropes down about thirty paces distant. Unseen by them, I suddenly stepped out from behind his tent. A stone, which had hit its target close to me, rebounded from the smooth wood and struck me on the forehead between the eyes. For a moment I was nearly stunned, more perhaps from shock than from the actual blow. My first thought was that I had been struck by a bullet.

Gasping and with a frightened face, Fuaz ran up to me. He had noticed the wound in my forehead and a few drops of blood on my fingers, which I had, in my confusion, pressed to my head. When I took the lad in my arms and laughingly lifted him up, to let him know that it was no great matter, a look of anger crossed his face, as if he had been offended. He wriggled free and stood still before me. Then he tore his *aghal* and *kaffiyah* (the veil and head-cloth) from his head, letting the six fine braids of his hair fall over his shoulders. They reached to his hips. With tears welling from defiant eyes, he cried, "*Ana dachilak!* Before the face of God I deliver myself unto you: tell me the price of your blood." It sounded not in the least regretful, nor did it suggest any wish to be forgiven. It was sheer defiance, because he thought I had made fun of his offer.

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223 down upon the hare, this is called *aṣ-ṣejr jedlih*. If it succeeds in plunging its talons into the hare's back, *'alak*, the falconer rides up at full speed behind it, covers it and its prey with his cloak, *siapa*, *jiṭabṭeh*, the bird on the back, shouting "*kiš kiš*," and endeavors to remove it, *tenaźnel*. The falcon receives its share of the prey only inside the tent, never on the open plain. A well-trained falcon can catch as much as ten *ḥabâri* and twenty hares a day, but only if there is an abundance of game. But there are few falconers who keep their falcons as long as three or four months, as they all get lost. In February and March they do not return, especially if they meet with wild falcons.

539r 517 524 The young Bedouin is fond of hunting with falcon and greyhound. He can then ride more freely among the throngs of his migrating countrymen and can approach his sweetheart, talk to her, or offer her his booty. He therefore sings:

Já lejt li ǧerwen w-já lejt li ṭir
w-ḳu'ajjeden nenseṣ 'alejh aš-šdâdi
neǧi mâ bejn as-salaf w-al-meṣâhir
w-nešalli-l-ǧerwa w-aṣ-ṣejr ṣâdi.

Oh had I a hound for the chase! Oh had I a hunting falcon
And a little camel! we would place a saddle upon it,
And would ride forth between the leader's troop and the migrating tribe,
We would call to the hound, and the falcon would hunt.

223 539l The *ǧerwa* is the bitch of the greyhound species. The leader's troop of warriors, *salaf*, rides generally one or two kilometers in front of the pack train. The *ǧerwa* runs out in front and raises hares and *ḥabâri*, which flee from the danger behind the *salaf*, but are turned back by the migrating tribe. Thus a good falcon has the best opportunity for hunting between the riding troop and the camels with the baggage.

Aṣ-ṣejr 'ajja já-l-ḳzej'i jeṣṣdi
já alli 'ajja jeṣṣd al-ḥebâra
lâ wa' ḥaddjef naklejteh 'al-âdi
meseḥḥ ar-riṣâa 'afen aṣ-ṣejâra.

The hunting falcon, O al-Ḳzej'i! has refused the chase,
Alas for the one which refused to hunt the ḥebâra;

work. If they deserve it they are spanked with a stick, not only by their mother or father, but by the slaves both male and female. The Rwala believe that the rod originated in Paradise, *al-'aṣa aṣharat ṣin al-ǧenna*, and that it also leads man back to it. The older boys attend to the mares, guard them on the pasture grounds, take them to water, and ride on them while migrating; they also bring fuel to the men's quarters, serve the guests with water, etc. They squat with the men around the fire listening to the conversation and learn also to recite poems and songs, in this manner acquainting themselves with all public affairs. Boys learn to shoot before they are fourteen and take part in at least one raid before they are sixteen. At this period the father would not think of punishing the disobedience of his son simply with a stick but uses a saber or a dagger instead. By cutting or stabbing them the father not merely punishes the boys but hardens them for their future life. In the opinion of the Bedouins the son who disobeys is guilty of rebellion, for which the proper punishment is the saber, *as-sejf lemin 'aṣe'*.

BOYS' GAMES

The boys are never idle. When they are not helping their parents, they play. Some of their games are dangerous; all, however, tend to harden them and sharpen their faculties.

In playing *rumḥa* two lines are formed. The members of each side, holding their companions by the hand, take position and advance against the other side, kicking their opponents till one whole side rolls down, *jetardmaḥún*. Many leave the game with their bellies black and blue, but will stand up as long as they can bear the pain.

A very dangerous game is *ḥáru*. The boys bring their slings, *miḥḥa'* (pl., *maḥáli'*), gather a supply of pebbles, separate into two hostile groups, and, declaring war on each other, throw stones from their slings, *jetaḥárún*. Blood always flows. Often a boy loses an eye, gets a broken head or a split bone in his hand or leg, or even falls down dead; and yet the parents never forbid the game. For a dead boy the kin of the player who killed him must pay the blood price; for other serious hurts half of that. If the guilty party cannot be found, the relatives of all the boys participating in the game must pay, compensation of this kind being called *medda' ṭḥejja*.

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Ma'ḥâla, another game, is not so dangerous. The boy takes off his kerchief, ties a knot in the middle of it, first putting a round pebble into it, posts himself at the goal, *mid*, and then throws the knotted kerchief to his comrades who are waiting about fifty paces away. The boy who catches it beats the others with the knot while they run to the goal. Then, returning to his place, he throws the kerchief among the boys, who shout at him: "Give the kerchief to him who gave it to thee, *'aṭṭa min 'aṭâṭîhe*," and the game starts over again. Here also many a bump on the head or bloody bruise on the body is carried home from the game. 524 857

At night the boys play what is called *muḏmaḥ sarw'*. They take a peg sharpened at both ends, *ḫâṣ*, of the kind used to fasten the back wall of the tent to the roof. One of the boys takes his stand at the goal, *mid*, and throws the peg to his playmates posted about twenty paces from him. The boy who catches it cries: "*Muḏmaḥ sarw'*, *muḏmaḥ* goes with me," and runs straight for the goal. The others throw themselves on him, trying to get hold of the peg and shouting: "I am the father of strength, I shall crush thee, *ab-al-'arejč w-'ârreč*." The assailed boy defends himself as best he can, stabbing with the peg, kicking, and biting, so that he may reach the goal with the peg in his possession. Most of the scars resulting from this game are, of course, found on the clothes of the players.

When *ḥâǧîje* is played, a pit is dug on a level plot of ground, and inside it a smaller but deeper pit. On the edge of the larger pit a stone ball, *ḥâǧîje*, is laid; and a similar ball, *sie*, only some sizes larger, is thrown from the goal at the first ball so as to knock it down into the large pit where it must roll into the smaller one. When all have had their turn, the boys who have succeeded in putting the ball in its place mount the backs of their less fortunate comrades, who must carry them like horses from the pit to the goal. That the riders seldom forget to kick and cuff their horses to get more speed out of them hardly needs to be added.

In the game of *ḥejl w-ḥejl* riders and horses are chosen by drawing lots. The riders take their places, the horses carrying them to the goal. There the horses cry: "*Al-ḥejl aḫlâb*," roll over to one side and then sit on the backs of their riders.

For the game of *ṭakka* every boy arms himself with a large tent peg. The boy chosen by lot lays a small sharp peg,

524 857 *ḥṣâṣ*, on the highest stone near by, taps it with his large peg enough to make it fly up a little, and when in the air gives it a good blow so as to make it fly to the other players who wait at a distance of about thirty or forty paces. Every one of them tries to hit the flying sharp peg with his own peg in order to send it back. As long as no one succeeds, the peg is returned to the first boy, who continues to bat it until one of his comrades finally strikes it and takes his place. When striking at the *ḥṣâṣ* peg the head or shoulders of a player often come in contact with it, with consequences easy to imagine.

Many a kerchief is torn to ribbons in the game called *dehdûn*. One boy rolls a large stone down a slightly inclined plane, while the others try to stop it, *'akadîha*, with their kerchiefs. The one succeeding in this is entitled to roll it, *jedahdîha*.

'Akê 'akub is a game in which all the boys run for the goal, about a hundred paces away. He who reaches it first shouts: "*'akê 'akub*," a command for the others to turn and run back to the starting point. The first boy to reach it now calls out the same words, "*'akê 'akub*," and flies with the others to the goal again. This is repeated until all are exhausted. Finally the one to reach the goal first exclaims: "A pile of wood, *korkob ǧaḍub*," and sinks to the ground; the others follow his example, lie still for a while, but then begin to kick and strike out all around regardless of whom they hit.

DITTIES SUNG BY GIRLS

539x 857 533 The girls have no such games. Occasionally at night they form two choirs and alternately sing, *jesemrun*, various ditties called *summejr*:

Tafawwalû bel-faṣa	For a good sign take a great plain,
jâ-lli ṭalab fâlî	O all ye who ask me for a good sign!
fâli râḍen w-ar-raḍed	Fortunate is my sign, for luck
ǧajjeb al-fâli.	Is the best of all signs ye may want.

539x 857 777 726 When the women and girls are about to start their *summejr*, the men and youths gather not far off. Before a raid or any act of importance every man observes the first word uttered by the woman or girl dear to him. That word they

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Verse 1. The wandering dervishes come from China, India, and Persia to Irak, where they join the moving clans or the pilgrims, so that they may reach al-Medina or Mecca. The Bedouins look after them, passing them on from tribe to tribe, but the pilgrims pay no attention to them. If a dervish is stricken with disease, they leave him lying on the camping ground without any scruples as to his fate, which is usually death. 2. *Walad al-ḥalâl* is an honest, godly man. 4. *Musfehel* has the same meaning as *mukujjef*, in good spirits, happy. 6. *Ṭwârîd* or *'alâjem* are symptoms of disease.

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RIDDLES

The Rwala love to solve riddles, *ḥabâwa*, clothing them always in poetical garb. The following were told me by Ġwâd al-'Âni the third one having been known also to Ḥmâr abu 'Aww.

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Anšedk 'an sabʿ masmijjât
lâ jetîhen w-lâ jṣîbhen 'atîzât ǧedîdât
kill men miša' miša' bihen alli ḥajj w-alli mât.

I ask thee for seven already named:
They err not, cannot be forgotten, are both old and new.
Whoever walks in them walks in life and in death.

Answer: *Sbû'*, the seven days of the week.

Anšedk 'an ḫamsen ǧîll
lâ hen ḫejl w-lâ hen bîl
eṭnên bišams w-ṯalâṯen bẓill.

About the important five I ask thee —
It is not horses, not camels;
Two are in the sun and three in the shade.

Answer: *Ṣalawât*, the five prescribed prayers.

Anšedk 'an šî'en salla-l-ḫejl w-an-nûk
w-kill al-bwâdi bil-maḥabbe sallâha
teḍḥak leh al-bîḍ al-'aḏâra
saḥaf rowk jarmi ḳarâniṣ al-ḳaṭa' min samâha.

For a thing that rejoices mares and she-camels I ask thee —
That cheers the whole desert with love;

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Fair women have smiles for it,
While anxiety for it brings down even the wild foes of the *ḳaṭa'* from heaven.

Answer: *Ẓana*, progeny, offspring.

Sahaf rowk is grief, sorrowing or anxiety for children. Ĝwâd said "*ḳurânis*," Ḥmâr "*ḳarânis*." *Ḳarânis* means "birds already feathered," thus "adult." *Ḳarânis al-ḳaṭa'* are the old *ḳaṭa*, sand grouse, who abandon their flights when anxiety for their young seizes them. They nest generally in low plains covered with luxuriant grasses and perennials, the seeds of which furnish the young with their first food. From these nesting places the *ḳaṭa'* often flies as much as a hundred kilometers to watering places. According to Ḥmâr *ḳarânis al-ḳaṭa'* are falcons hunting the *ḳaṭa'*. They too abandon hunting when overcome by anxiety for their young.

A Šarâri who had never seen a goose asked a Rwejli what it looked like and said: "What has it in common with a gazelle?" The answer was: "Its unsteadiness and timidity." "And what with a white antelope?" "The smoothness of its hair and the eye." "What with an ostrich?" "Thin calves and its manner of moving." Then our Šarâri said with glee: "Allâh be praised! now I know what a goose looks like!"